

DRS turns 30

The Legislature formed the Department of Retirement Systems in September of 1976. It's hard to believe that 30 years have already passed.

Vickie Worgum, a team supervisor for the Teachers' Retirement System, remembers that in 1976, DRS staff all worked in one room and with one phone line. "When a member called for someone, we put them on hold and announced it across the desks." She grins at the memory. With staff now handling an average of 14,000 calls per month, the days of a single phone line are long gone.

We consider it a privilege to work with you throughout the different phases of your life and career.

Three of our current employees – Cathy Wolfe, Linda Gamboa and Vickie Worgum – have been with DRS since the beginning, when several independent retirement systems were brought together under one umbrella agency. Stories they

recently told staff of the "early days" both entertained us and helped us realize how far we've come.

A lot has changed in 30 years, not the least of which is the fact that we're able to get information to you much faster. Our Web site averages nearly half a million hits a month. More than 61,000 members and retirees have signed up to access their individual account online – day or night. And this newsletter is, for the most part, distributed electronically, saving the time and cost of printing nearly 300,000 paper copies.

One thing has not changed. We consider it a privilege to work with you throughout the different phases of your life and career. Whether you call, e-mail, come to see us in person or visit our Web site, you'll always find caring people. And excellent service. ■

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Attention TRS Plan 3 members

During the month of January, TRS Plan 3 members may change their contribution rate.

You can obtain a rate change form from your employer or find one on the TRS Plan 3 Web site at www.icmarc.org/plan3/trs/. Completed forms must be turned in to your employer by January 31. ■

Plan 3 transfer opportunity

During the month of January, eligible PERS, SERS and TRS Plan 2 members have the opportunity to transfer to Plan 3. If you're interested in putting together your own investment mix, the defined contribution element of Plan 3 offers a range of investment programs and choices.

Several tools, including financial modeling software and a comparison chart, are available to help you decide the best choice for your individual situation. For details, visit our Web site and click on the "members" section. ■

Online calculators now available for new TRS and PERS programs

We've created online calculators to help eligible TRS and PERS members estimate the cost of participating in the following programs:

- **Purchase of service credit for teaching experience outside of Washington state** – TRS Plan 2 and Plan 3 members can choose to purchase up to seven years of service credit earned by teaching outside the Washington retirement system. The additional credit will increase their benefit and may be used to qualify for retirement.
- **Higher benefit multiplier for past judicial service** – judges and justices who are currently PERS members can choose to have their retirement benefit calculated using a higher percentage in the formula. The higher multiplier will be funded through increases in the contributions paid by judges and justices who opt into this program.

For more information or to use one of the new calculators, just go to our Web site at www.drs.wa.gov.

The TRS calculator is located in the members section of our Web site under "Hot Topics." To use the judicial benefit calculator, you'll need to first register for online access to your account. You'll find that information on our home page.

If you have questions, please be sure to call us at 1-800-547-6657. We'll be glad to help. ■

November is open enrollment for DCAP



The Dependent Care Assistance Program (DCAP) allows state government and higher education employees who pay for childcare, elder care or disabled dependent care to reduce their federal income and social security taxes.

Open enrollment occurs every November for the following calendar year (January – December). New employees may enroll in DCAP within 60 days of employment. Employees experiencing a qualifying change in status (such as marriage or the birth of a child) may also enroll outside the open enrollment period.

For more information, contact DCAP customer service at 360-664-7005, toll-free at 1-800-423-1524 (select option 4) or visit our Web site. ■

Plan ahead for your retirement



DRS offers free planning seminars and workshops. Your spouse or partner is welcome to attend.

Seminars run from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

and include presentations on financial and estate planning, health insurance, Social Security, the Deferred Compensation Program and the specifics of your retirement plan.

Workshops run 60 to 90 minutes and cover service credits, retirement eligibility, benefit calculations, payment options and other plan-specific information.

These are group presentations. Individual appointments are available by contacting DRS at

recep@drs.wa.gov or by calling 1-800-547-6657 or 360-664-7000 in the Olympia area.

How to register:

- Online - Via the Internet at www.drs.wa.gov: click the Retirement Planning "Quick Clicks."
- Telephone - Call 1-888-711-6676 or 360-664-7300 in the Olympia area. The TDD line is toll-free at 1-866-377-8895 or 360-586-5450 in the Olympia area.
- E-mail, U.S. mail or campus mail - Send your registration to register@drs.wa.gov or to PO Box 48380, Olympia, WA 98504-8380 or by campus mail to MS 48380. If your spouse or partner will attend with you, include that person's name.

Seminar and Workshop Dates and Locations January - April 2007

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Saturday, January 20 - Kelso | Saturday, March 24 - Mount Vernon |
| Saturday, January 27 - Bremerton | Saturday, March 31 - Ellensburg |
| Saturday, February 24 - Tumwater* | Saturday, April 21 - Pullman |
| Saturday, March 17 - Seattle* | Saturday, April 28 - Yakima* |

Note: All locations include workshops for PERS, PSERS, SERS and TRS members. LEOFF and WSPRS workshops are offered only at the locations shown with an asterisk (*).

Workshop Schedule

| | PLAN 1 | PLAN 2 | PLAN 3 |
|--------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| PERS | 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. | 11:15 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. | 11:15 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. |
| PSERS | --- | 11:15 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. | --- |
| SERS | --- | 11:15 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. | 11:15 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. |
| TRS | 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. | 11:15 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. | 11:15 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. |
| LEOFF | 11:15 a.m. – 12:25 p.m. | 1:35 p.m. – 2:35 p.m. | --- |
| WSPRS | 12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. | --- | --- |

DRS is planning seminars in the following cities after April 2007: Bellingham, Edmonds, Everett, Seattle, Spokane, Tacoma, Tri-Cities, Tumwater, Vancouver and Wenatchee.

Education employees—Annual statements will be distributed in November

If you are an employee of a public school district, an educational service district, a higher education institution or the Washington State School for the Deaf and Blind you will receive your annual retirement statement this month. DRS mails the statements to employers, who then distribute them to members.



Annual statements provide updates on your service credit and contributions and are based on the most recent information reported to DRS by your employer. Your statement may not match the total retirement contribution on your year-end pay slip because contributions are generally posted to your account the month following payroll deduction.

If you are a Plan 3 member, your annual statement will only provide service credit information. Plan 3 members receive quarterly statements that detail their contributions and account balance.

To view your annual statement online, sign up for online account access—available on our Web site.

Be sure to review your annual statement carefully. If you find discrepancies or have questions, please contact your payroll officer, or call DRS if you are no longer employed. ■

Plan for a long retirement

DRS administers benefits for nearly 1,000 retirees over the age of 95.

More than 120 retirees are 100 years or older. The oldest is 106.

Public service must be good for your health!

It's never too early to attend a retirement planning seminar.

See page 3 for more information.

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This newsletter is delivered in bulk to employers. Changes to affixed mailing labels should be directed to your employer.

Retirement Outlook is available to members in alternate formats. For more information contact the editor at 360-664-7097.